



Many Voices / One Vision



2026 Legislative Candidate Survey

*Questions for Legislative Candidates — The Arc of Washington
The Community Advocacy Coalition for Developmental Disabilities
The Children's Campaign Fund*

Name: Claire Wilson

Position: Senate

Legislative District: 30

Email: claireforsenate30ld@gmail.com

Website:

<https://www.claireforsenate.com/about/>



1. Do you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has an intellectual/developmental disability (IDD)? If yes, would you describe its impact on you and your candidacy? If not, what have you learned about people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and how has it impacted your candidacy?

I have vigorously advocated for Early Supports for Infants and Children (ESIT) and for protecting enhancements made during previous sessions amid budget challenges. I have also been engaged in Universal Design for Learning and Least Restrictive Environments in my past work with our state and federally funded infant/toddler and preschool programs. Over the last five sessions I've been engaged with the I/DD community in our work on the

"Nothing About Us Without Us" Act and other legislation impacting this very vulnerable and valuable community.

2. What policies and systems are you aware of that impact the lives of people with IDD and their families? If elected, what responsibility would you have to change those policies or systems?

As Chair of the Human Services Committee in the Senate, there are many policies and systems that have impacted the IDD community. Current concerns include federal changes to SNAP and Medicaid that are already negatively impacting the IDD community, as well as ensuring that the state can continue to provide necessary resources and support. I meet on a regular basis with the DSHS Secretary to stay up-to-date on the issues and challenges as well as meet on a regular basis with advocates and voices from the community most impacted.

3. If elected, what are your top three priorities, and how would people with IDD and their families benefit from each priority?

Improving outcomes for children and families, strengthening behavioral health systems, and expanding access to stable housing are my priorities. I will work with the IDD community to close the remaining RHCs, continuing the efforts from the last two sessions. These are issues that affect many Washingtonians, including people with IDD and their families. When families can find housing they can afford, access services when they need them, and trust that their children will be supported throughout their lives, people have more opportunities to thrive and communities are stronger.

4. When you have questions about how to best support people with IDD and their families, what or who are your trusted resources?

My best resource will always be the people most impacted by these decisions. I believe that good policy starts with listening to people with disabilities, their families, caregivers, and advocates. In my career, I've learned that often the people with lived experience have the best insight into what is working and what is not and where change is needed.

5. The national trend -- and legal mandate --- supports transitioning individuals with IDD out of institutional settings and into community-based care, which is not only the best practice but also the most cost-effective approach. Studies consistently show that community-based services cost significantly less per person than institutional care while providing greater independence and quality of life. In Washington the cost of care in a Residential Habilitation Center (RHC) is more than double the cost of equivalent services in community settings. Although Washington has made progress, continued efforts are needed to align with best practices, civil rights, federal priorities, and fiscal responsibility. Transitioning more individuals into community-based care will allow the state to reinvest savings into services for much needed community-based services. How do you believe Washington state should approach investment in home and community based services for people with IDD in the next five years?

Washington should continue to invest in services that help people live in their communities with the support they need to be successful. Most people want to remain close to family, friends, and community connections, and our policies should reflect that. As demand is increasing, we need to ensure that services are accessible and responsive so that individuals and families do not have to wait for support.

6. Is there any other information you'd like constituents with intellectual or developmental disabilities and their family and friends to know?

I've constantly worked to help people navigate systems and access opportunities that improve their quality of life. I know families spend years fighting for the services and support their loved ones need, and I have profound respect for that work. I was directly involved with the 'Nothing About Us Without Us' Act as well as SB 5793, which provided compensation for lived experience. These landmark pieces of legislation are very important to me. If re-elected, I will continue to listen, learn, and work to ensure people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included, valued, and supported in our communities.